



All Souls' Catholic
PRIMARY SCHOOL

HOMEWORK POLICY

October 2021

All Souls' Catholic Primary School

Homework Policy

Rationale

Homework is anything children do outside the normal school day that contributes to their learning, in response to guidance from the school. Homework encompasses a whole variety of activities instigated by teachers to support the children's learning. At All Souls', we believe that homework plays an important part of a child's development and are committed to providing meaningful learning opportunities for children at home. We do however acknowledge the important role of play and free time in a child's growth and development. Homework should not prevent children from taking part in activities of various out-of-school clubs or pursuing other interests. In fact, we believe that homework should support the development of children's wider skills, abilities and interests and should allow them the freedom to use and express themselves in ways that they choose.

Many studies in recent years have indicated that homework set for primary age children has negligible impact on achievement. Equally, we have found increasing numbers of parents finding homework to have a negative impact on family life. With this in mind, we believe that homework should not be set for homework's sake, but should have a very clear and focused role, if it is to have a positive impact.

Homework at All Souls' will therefore primarily focus on reading, spelling, punctuation and grammar and times tables as we believe that developing a competency in these is fundamental to a child's overall academic development. Outside of this, homework set should encourage children to use their own talents or skills that they would like to develop and should be as big or small part of their time outside of school as they choose.

In addition, this policy works alongside the home/school agreement which is issued and signed at the beginning of each academic year.

Aims

The aims of this policy are:

- To develop and reinforce the effective partnership between the school and parents and other carers.
- To provide an opportunity for parents to become a part of their child's education through support, supervision and encouragement.
- To increase parental understanding of the curriculum and purpose of work that is being covered in school.
- Create a consistent, progressive and whole school approach to using homework as a tool to extend children's development and provide challenge.
- To encourage pupils to develop personal responsibility for life-long learning.

Purpose

At All Souls' we believe that homework:

- Is an opportunity for children to consolidate and reinforce skills and understanding across the curriculum.
- Can give pupils the chance to access a range of resources that may not be as accessible within school.
- Can significantly contribute to the development of children's fundamental reading, spelling, grammar and numeracy skills.
- Should be designed to increasingly encourage self management and independence in learning.
- Should have equal value to work which is completed during school time.
- Should be set appropriately and proportionately to the age and abilities of the pupils.
- Should not be a burden to teachers or parents.
- Should give children the freedom to express themselves in disciplines as they choose and thus give us an even greater understanding of them, their interests and strengths.

Types of homework

Reading

Children across the school will be issued with a reading book, appropriate to both their chronological and reading age, which is to be read at home. For children in KS1 and EY, books will be provided to allow children to practise their reading from books that match their phonics knowledge. Reading at home should take place as regularly as is possible. The expectation is that children should aim to read for an average of 10 minutes per evening, although we do appreciate that for many reasons, it may not be possible to read 'every' evening. Many children will be reading scribed books which are graded by difficulty, although our ultimate aim is for children to be 'free-reading' books of their choice and developing their own preference and tastes in genres and authors. Regardless of reading ability, it is important that every child has the opportunity to be supported by an adult or more advanced reader at home when reading. In the home/school agreement parents are encouraged to support their child with reading every day throughout KS1 and at least twice per week throughout KS2. The amount of support a child needs will depend greatly: some children may need support in sounding out or understanding the meaning of words whereas others will benefit more from discussing the plot or language used in the book. Children are issued with a reading record which should be used to record what is being read and the frequency. As children progress through the school, they should become more responsible for recording this themselves. This record book should be kept up-to-date, signed by a parent and returned to school weekly, as determined by the class teacher, so that a school adult can review what a child has read. Parents should note that in signing the reading record, they are confirming that their child has read and understands the texts listed. Class teachers have the responsibility to ensure that children are receiving a 'balanced diet' of reading materials – particularly as children move away from the reading scheme and that high quality texts are chosen.

Spelling

In KS1 children will receive weekly spelling homework in the form of a list spellings to be learned for the following week. The spellings will be differentiated and are based on the schools phonics and spelling programme. Children in KS2 are taught spellings weekly, in accordance with the school's English and Spelling policy. For homework, KS2 children will be given a list of 5 statutory words to learn each week according to their key stage. These are available to download on the school website under 'Curriculum'. Children will also be taught a different spelling rule within the class each week, from which they will be tested on an additional 5 words. Children will be provided an opportunity to practise their spellings in school but it is expected that they will spend an average of at least 5 minutes per night learning and revising their spellings. Children's spellings are recorded in their spelling book as well as their weekly tests. At the beginning of each academic year, parents will be issued with a copy of the National Curriculum word list appropriate to their child's age. This is a list of word that children are expected to be able to spell by the end of each school phase.

Times tables

Times tables are a fundamental building block of basic mathematic skills, and a knowledge of times tables facts is crucial to children's success across the breadth of the Numeracy curriculum. In KS2, therefore, children are expected to learn and practise their rapid recall of facts from times tables each day at home. Rapid recall is an instantaneous recall, from memory, which does not rely on answers being calculated or thought through. Parents/carers should be regularly testing their child's knowledge of facts as well as revising previously covered facts to ensure that recall of these remains sharp. Class teachers are responsible for letting children and parents know what times tables they are currently working towards securing. From Year 2, children will take home a weekly times tables challenge sheet, containing 60 random multiplication and associated division facts from the times tables appropriate to their age. Children should spend 4 minutes at home completing as many of these as possible and bring the sheet back to school to mark within their maths lessons. Teachers should tell children on which days these will be set and must be returned. Completing these sheets is in addition to daily times tables practice. In addition to this, as a school we have an online subscription to Times Tables Rock Stars which children have individual logins for. Teachers use this to set class tasks and tournaments on a weekly basis.

Punctuation and Grammar

Punctuation and grammar homework is delivered through an online subscription to SPaG.com which children have individual logins for. Teachers use this to set practice punctuation and grammar questions for children in their class to consolidate their learning at home alongside their teaching at school. In Year 5 and Year 6, this will be set weekly; in Year 2, 3 and 4, this will be set fortnightly. Children in Year 1 will also be provided with their punctuation and grammar homework fortnightly but not until the second half of the Spring term.

Finishing incomplete work

With an increasing pressure on the school day, there is much less time available for children to 'finish off' work, and the impact of incomplete work can soon become quite substantial. Children do work at different rates, which teachers take into account through their planning and delivery of lessons. Where children do not make the most of lesson time available to complete school work however, they may be asked to complete this at home and return it to school the next day.

Consolidation/Revision tasks

As children move towards the end of KS2, in order to prepare children for the transition to secondary school teachers will routinely set additional pieces of homework to consolidate or extend learning in the classroom as well as to revise for the end of Key Stage statutory assessments. There is no set frequency for such tasks nor a strict timetable for teachers to set these – reflecting the practice that takes place at many secondary schools. Children will always, however, be given clear guidance as to what is expected and as well as adequate time to complete any tasks.

Note regarding term-time holidays

Please note that if parents choose to take holidays during term time, teachers will not respond to requests for work for children to complete during these holidays. Equally, if a child is absent from school as they are deemed to poorly to attend, teachers will not respond to requests from parents for work to be set.

Long-term absence

Should a child be required to remain absent from school for an extended period of time, for example as a result of a medical condition, injury or for safeguarding reasons, the school will provide work and learning opportunities for the child at home. This may be through the school's learning platform, Google Classroom, or in printed hard copy format – whichever will work best for the particular child/situation.

Expectations

- It is expected that all homework holds the same value as work which is completed within school.
- Homework of all forms should be appropriate to both the age and ability of the pupils
- Children are expected to take responsibility for their homework and where they have been absent from school, it is their responsibility to ensure that they are aware of any homework tasks that they have missed including weekly spellings.
- Teachers are to ensure that pupils are taking home appropriate reading books and to monitor the frequency that children are reading at home.
- Children who fail to complete homework, or submit work which does not meet a teacher's expectations will be asked to attend homework club that week to repeat the work. If this facility is not available, children will be asked to complete the work during break/lunch times. This does not apply to unit tasks.
- It is an expectation that all children are reading at home. If a child is not reading and recording the amount as specified in this policy, they will be asked to stay in at play / lunchtimes and read to make up the required time.
- If children do not have access to electronic devices at home to complete online tasks, parents are asked to let the class teacher know before the deadline so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Monitoring and review

- It is the duty of the senior leadership team to monitor and review all homework, as well as this policy.
- This policy should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that homework continues to be purposeful and meets the changing needs of our children and government requirements.
- As part of the monitoring and review cycle, the views of children, parents and teachers with regard to homework will be sought and considered on an annual basis – and more frequently if required.